AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.   (Currently Amended) A <u>computer-implemented</u> method ~~for estimation of component gating risk in manufacturing operations~~ comprising:

    <u>estimating of a component gating risk in a manufacturing process, comprising</u>

        ~~generating an altered component plan by altering a component plan for a component;~~

        computing a mean production value using **[[said]]** <u>an</u> altered component plan; and

        computing said component gating risk using said mean production value.

2.   (Currently Amended) A <u>computer-implemented</u> method ~~for estimation of component gating risk in manufacturing operations~~ comprising:

    <u>estimating a component gating risk in a manufacturing process, comprising</u>

        ~~generating an increased component plan by increasing a component plan for a component;~~

        computing a first mean production value using said increased component plan;

        ~~generating a decreased component plan by decreasing said component plan for said component;~~

        computing a second mean production value using said decreased component plan; and

        computing said component gating risk using said first and said second mean production values.

3.   Cancelled.

4.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said estimating further comprises:

    generating an altered component plan by altering a component plan for a component;

5.   (New) The method of claim 4, wherein

    said altered component plan is generated by altering a component plan for a component.

6.   (New) The method of claim 5, wherein

Serial No. 09/942,249

said component is a component used in said manufacturing process.

7.   (New) The method of claim 2, wherein said estimating further comprises:
generating an increased component plan.

8.   (New) The method of claim 7, wherein said estimating further comprises:
generating a decreased component plan.

9.   (New) The method of claim 8, wherein

said increased component plan is generated by increasing a component plan for a
component, and

said decreased component plan is generated by decreasing said component plan for said
component.

10.   (New) The method of claim 9, wherein

said component is a component used in said manufacturing process.

11.   (New) The method of claim 8, wherein said estimating further comprises:
generating said component plan for said component.

12.   (New) The method of claim 11, wherein

said increased component plan is generated by increasing a component plan for a
component, and

said decreased component plan is generated by decreasing said component plan for said
component.

13.   (New) The method of claim 12, wherein

said component is a component used in said manufacturing process.

14.   (New) A computer program product comprising:

a first set of instructions, executable on a computer system, configured to estimate a
component gating risk in a manufacturing process, comprising

a first subset of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to compute a first mean production value using said increased component plan;

a second subset of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to compute a second mean production value using said decreased component plan;

a third subset of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to compute said component gating risk using said first and said second mean production values; and

computer readable media, wherein said computer program product is encoded in said computer readable media.

15. (New) The computer program product of claim 14, wherein said first set of instructions further comprises:

a fourth subset of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to generate an increased component plan.

16. (New) The computer program product of claim 15, wherein said first set of instructions further comprises:

a fifth subset of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to generate a decreased component plan.

17. (New) The computer program product of claim 16, wherein

said increased component plan is generated by increasing a component plan for a component, and

said decreased component plan is generated by decreasing said component plan for said component.

18. (New) The computer program product of claim 17, wherein

said component is a component used in said manufacturing process.

19.   (New) The computer program product of claim 15, wherein said first set of instructions further comprises:

a sixth subset of instructions, executable on said computer system, configured to generate said component plan for said component.

20.   (New) The computer program product of claim 19, wherein

said increased component plan is generated by increasing a component plan for a component, and

said decreased component plan is generated by decreasing said component plan for said component.

21.   (New) The computer program product of claim 20, wherein

said component is a component used in said manufacturing process.